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ABSTRACT

After describing some current problems in vocational guidance and summarizing relevant knowledge and theory in the field, this paper presents some practical plans, materials, and ideas for providing more useful vocational assistance to people of all ages. The paper reviews such prominent vocational guidance approaches as vocational information and guidance systems, special programs for special populations, curricular materials, career education, and assorted assessment devices. The author believes that the understanding of careers requires both organizational and developmental strategies and models as bases for intervention. He employs student assessment, environmental assessment, and environmental redesign to formulate a high school vocational program with the following components: (1) placement and work experience service; (2) translation service; (3) environmental design service; (4) trouble-shooters; and (5) staff relationships. This plan can be easily modified for other age groups. (Author/LAA)

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SOME PRACTICAL REMEDIES FOR PROVIDING VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR EVERYONE

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JOHN L. HOLLAND

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INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Center for Social Organization of Schools has two primary objectives: to develop a scientific knowledge of how schools affect their students, and to use this knowledge to develop better school practices and organization.

The Center works through three programs to achieve its objectives. The Schools and Maturity program is studying the effects of school, family, and peer group experiences on the development of attitudes consistent with psychosocial maturity. The objectives are to formulate, assess, and research important educational goals other than traditional academic achievement. The School Organization program is currently concerned with authority-control structures, task structures, reward systems, and peer group processes in schools. The Careers and Curricula program bases its work upon a theory of career development. It has developed a self-administered vocational guidance device and a self-directed career program to promote vocational development and to foster satisfying curricular decisions for high school, college, and adult populations.

This report, prepared by the Careers and Curricula program, examines the current status of vocational guidance services and offers some practical ways, based on a single well-studied theory, to make guidance more effective and less costly.

ABSTRACT

Current vocational guidance services are generally expensive, impractical, atheoretical and ineffective, failing to reach most people who want and need guidance and often failing to help those who are reached. This paper describes some of the current problems of vocational guidance, summarizes relevant knowledge and theory in the field, and offers some practical plans for helping children, adolescents, and adults.

The basic plan for providing more effective guidance is one designed for high school students. This high school plan can be easily modified for children, college students and adults.

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents some practical plans, materials, and ideas for providing more useful vocational assistance to people of all ages. These remedies are labelled "practical," because they rely upon a single theory which has received substantial empirical support, and because they are less expensive, easier to implement, and more effective than most current practices or proposed remedies.

The paper has been stimulated mainly by two situations in the United States. (1) The long-standing failure to provide vocational guidance to everyone who wanted such services, and (2) the recent rash of atheoretical, grandiose, expensive, impractical, uniformed solutions proposed by federal agencies and abetted by bandwagoning state agencies, publishers, and counselors in hot pursuit of funds.

The following sections describe the current scene with respect to vocational assistance, summarize some relevant knowledge and theory for coping with the vocational problems faced by most people, and propose some practical plans for assisting children, adolescents, and adults.

Current Scene

Vocational assistance comes at all age levels and in many forms (vocational counseling, vocational placement, vocational awareness, exploration, and experience programs, career seminars, group counseling, etc.) At the present time, one or more of these interventions is provided in elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, business colleges, technical institutes, employment and rehabilitation agencies, special centers, private agencies and consulting firms. In addition, such help is offered by people with a great range of talent and training -- from none to magnificent.

Some unknown proportion of these services are helpful. At the same time, many -- maybe the majority -- share a common core of deficiencies.

1. They reach only a small proportion of the populations who need such services. For example, the ratio of counselors to students in high schools is too great to result in any marked effects. In colleges, less than 10% of the students use the counseling center.

2. The cost of service is usually high, because most services involve person-to-person treatments.

3. The constructive influence of vocational services is relatively low. When this apparent fact is coupled with the high cost of service, the cost/benefit ratio is low.

4. Agencies and educational institutions that sponsor service rarely sponsor research and evaluation. And, if they do, they rarely respond to evidence for the need for improvement.

5. The people who train counselors are conservative and usually addicted to personal relationships as the method of choice. Consequently, they still tend to reinforce expensive and traditional practices in their students.

Although these criticisms are presented as facts, one can quarrel with each of them. I have formulated these out of my own experience as a vocational counselor and in reading the following evaluative studies (Cinsberg, 1972; Magoon, 1968; Hoyt, 1955; Froehlich, 1949; Hosford & Briskin, 1969; Krumboltz & Schroeder, 1965; Travers, 1949; and others). The present general-

izations are then not new; they are only stated in less felicitous form.

Solutions for coping with the present state of affairs also come in many forms, although a few programs or ideas are more prominent than others. They include:

1. Vocational Information or Guidance Systems. These ad hoc collections of computers, terminals, microfiche readers, and booklets are called systems, although their only integration is usually a kind of tasteless eclecticism. As a source of vocational assistance, these systems are, with a few exceptions, inordinately expensive, impractical (cannot serve many persons at a single time in a routine way), and require a large initial investment.

2. Special programs for special populations. It is grossly impractical and divisive to continue to create special programs for special groups. A better strategy would be to modify standard programs only when it is clear that standard programs do not work. Currently, we are creating special programs for women and persons in mid-career crises.

3. Curricular materials. These are to help students explore the world of work at a young age, although the long-range efforts of such programs are not known. Unfortunately, this burden falls on teachers who already are responsible for mental health, discipline, community chest, in addition to the three R's.

4. Career Education. This new brand of education is to careers what milieu therapy has been to mental hospitals. It is an attempt to orient and manipulate students for their own good from kindergarten through the 12th grade. Its comprehensiveness and complexity is not yet in full bloom. If it

flourishes (and federal money should help it do so), in the next few years an Avocational Education Association may be formed to put sloth, slovenliness, and recreation back in the schools.

5. Assorted assessment devices, tests, inventories, and informational materials. Publishers are wearing out their presses with auxiliary materials that could be labelled career, vocational, guidance or occupational. Because only a few test publishers do any fundamental research (some appear not even to read), this collection of materials is characterized by its atheoretical approach, use of contemporary formats and colors, and absence of evaluative studies. Like the family button box, the potential user is presented with a glittering but bewildering array of unorganized, incompatible materials. In comparison, an elaborate tinker toy set is a sophisticated and beautiful system with its compatible parts, models, flexibilities, and multiple plans.

In short, the practitioner has a great array of old and new tools, ideas, devices, and programs. At the same time, he appears unable to organize or integrate those resources he now has with those he might purchase, borrow, or imitate. In desperation, he buys more of the tried and true, establishes ad hoc programs as he gets new pressures, tries to buy whole universal programs, or succumbs to the canned programs pressed upon him by state or federal agents.

How did we arrive at this current state of confusion and why do we remain in it? There are many reasons; vocational guidance practice and research are weakened by numerous misunderstandings, meaningless questions, and misguided forms of humanism. At this point, I will try to clarify or dispense with some of these barriers to better knowledge and higher quality service. For other points of view, you should read Bartlett (1971), Crites (1969), Super (1971), Roe (1956). The following collection of miscellaneous ideas is arranged in

order of my irritation with them rather than in accordance with some rational scheme.

"Counseling Must Be Personal." The counseling and teaching professions attract a large proportion of friendly people who must love and be loved in order to get through the day. Consequently, they believe that other people also must have the same needs with the same intensity. As a natural corollary many also believe that any form of vocational intervention must provide for a person-to-person situation. These beliefs have prevented any major revision of the delivery system for vocational services. Some experience and recent experiments strongly imply that most people want help not love. In no case has an impersonal information or guidance system received a lower average rating than local counselors. To the contrary, most tests reveal that impersonal schemes are more highly rated as well as infinitely cheaper, have better attendance records, and are generally more dependable. In short, there is ample empirical evidence to support more impersonal approaches for the solution of vocational problems.

"Trait and Factor Approaches are Static and Out-moded." In their rush to illustrate that vocational decisions depend, in part, upon a person's life history, the VD or vocational development crowd (now the CD or career development crowd) had to belittle the "matching model" or what personal traits or factors, etc. go with what jobs. Because some counseling types are uncritical thinkers, they continue to mouth this meaningless battle cry. The facts seem clear -- nearly all of our most useful vocational assessment devices, classifications, and simulations rely upon well-established matching models.

The developmental model is a strategy that has produced only a few tools: (1) occupational knowledge tests (although a person's intelligence or SES are good estimates of occupational knowledge) and (2) vocational or career develop-

ment measures whose practical value remains in doubt (Osipow, 1968; Bartlett, 1971; Westbrook & Mastie, 1973).

The developmental strategy has also led to a longitudinal program of action. "VD must be in the whole curriculum from kindergarten through the 12th grade." The major assumptions of these career programs are tenuous: (1) It is possible to specify vocational treatments or experiences at every grade level that will produce more adaptive vocational behavior in adult life, (2) everyone needs the complete treatment from K-12, (3) the main VD problems are lack of occupational information and lack of information about self, (4) people cannot make up deficits, incurred as children, at older age levels, (5) vocational stages in development are well-defined, thoroughly researched, and reliable indices of vocational development, experiential or training needs.

None of these assumptions has strong empirical support. Current programs are extrapolated from a host of atypical unrepresentative studies of students and adults. These studies are weakened further by the occurrence of weak relationships between indices of vocational development and adult vocational behavior. School grades, intelligence, and SES are as predictive of adaptive behavior as are special vocational development indices.

In short, until the developmental strategy produces more explicit, validated plans for the introduction of vocational interventions, a heavy reliance upon the matching model is still warranted. And, when the developmental strategy does imply a specific group of interventions, it should be carefully integrated with the matching model so that the virtues of this older and well-established model will not be lost in the name of progress.

"There are 30,000 to 40,000 jobs, and new jobs are created every day." This statement or some variation is used to demonstrate the need for vocational

guidance. In contrast, the research data repeatedly indicate that there are only five to eight major kinds of work (Jeanneret & McCormick, 1972). True, there are 40,000 occupational titles, but most of these are minor variations on some main themes. Likewise, the new jobs are new all right, but they nearly always closely resemble some old jobs. Finally, the informational problem -- all those different titles -- has been greatly reduced by the development of occupational classification schemes which can be used to organize 40,000 titles into small sets of comprehensible occupational categories.

"Women need a special theory of career development." Because women belong to the human race, they probably share with men the same principles of development. Their different life styles are due largely to the outcomes of special cultural experience and are not due to the operation of special behavioral laws or principles. Men who are subjected to the same experience as women act in much the same way. For example, men and boys whose initiative and talents are deprecated also have difficulty in obtaining jobs and making a career.

"Stamp Out Indecision, Irrationality, and Anxiety." In the 1940's someone suggested that "undecided" students were either troubled or in trouble. This belief went unchallenged for 20 years as counselors searched for undecided students and attempted to convert them. Recently, several large scale studies, (Holland & Nichols, 1964; Baird, 1968; Elton, 1971) suggest that undecided students are like most students: they make decisions at older ages, and their decisions are as sensible as anyone else's. For most people indecision may only represent a slower or more complex rate of development. Only for a small minority does indecision seem to represent severe conflict and instability.

Irrationality and anxiety usually go hand in hand with any major decision

that involves great ambiguity, risk, and long term consequences: getting married, buying a house, choosing a job, etc. Although it is desirable to become as rational as possible about such decisions, learning to rely upon one's inner impulses should not be underestimated as a useful guide in ambiguous situations. Likewise, fear and anxiety often serve to motivate people to seek counseling, information, and advice when no other personal or situational force will bring an adaptive response.

Understanding Careers and Vocational Problems

The growth of vocational guidance services and career development programs assumes that many people -- young and old -- require special assistance if they are to cope effectively with the choosing of an occupation and the making of a career. Some clarification and verification of this complex assumption appears useful for three reasons: (1) vocational remedies should be tailored to vocational problems if they are to be both effective and inexpensive. (2) Vocational problems that resolve themselves in the normal course of living may not require treatment, and (3) the distribution of services and programs may depend more on traditional practice, publishers, governmental agencies, and professional involvement than upon actual need.

Vocational Problems

Most people have to cope with four kinds of vocational problems in their lifetime: (1) they must decide what occupation to follow, or enter an occupation by default due to poverty, prejudice, ignorance, etc.; (2) they must secure the training required to enter their chosen occupation or by default enter whatever occupation is available; (3) they must learn to cope with a life-time of job changes: when they should move sideways or upward, how to

cope with involuntary job changes, and when, where, and how to taper off or retire. And (4) for each job in his work history everyone must learn to cope successfully with the work itself, fellow workers, supervisors and subordinates. In short, every job presents occupational, interpersonal, and emotional problems which can lead either to achievement, support, and happiness, or to failure, alienation, and unhappiness.

There is substantial evidence that large proportions of the population select jobs, get the proper training, and manage their careers with little or no help from counselors or vocational agencies of any kind. For example, Flanagan et al (1971) found that only 2% of the college students in the Project Talent sample were sorry about the kind of work they had chosen, and only 5% were unhappy about their choice of major field. Flanagan et al dismiss these findings as the outcome of students liking what they have, or must live with. I prefer to interpret these findings as meaning that most college students can cope successfully with their vocational decisions without professional help, although they may lie a little. Other longitudinal studies suggest that the majority of the population have orderly and predictable work histories (Holland et al, 1971; Nafziger et al, 1972; Parsons, 1970). These and other studies are strong signs that the average person is not a mindless victim of society in his search for satisfying work.

The need for professional and curricular help for all potential workers is also negated by numerous studies which indicate that only a small proportion of the population uses vocational services, and a large proportion of these people testify that such services are not very helpful. Other studies indicate that peers, friends, and family are the major sources of vocational counseling.

Vocational Development

The successful vocational adaptation of the majority of the population appears to flow from numerous personal assets and environmental advantages. These include: academic talents (reading, writing, mathematical talents), nonacademic talents and physical assets (interpersonal competency, good health, freedom from physical defects, etc.). These personal assets usually go hand in hand with social status, income, and membership in favored racial or religious groups. High levels of income and status provide a greater range of experience and opportunity for the development of socially valued academic and nonacademic talents, more and better remedial, physical, psychological, and educational services and related benefits. In short, the majority handle their vocational problems more or less successfully, because they have developed the skills and talents necessary to deal with such problems, and because they have access to a great range of environmental resources through educated friends and relatives or because they can purchase information, training, and advice.

In contrast, perhaps 30 per cent of the population (young and old) require the extensive services and remedies reviewed earlier. In short, vocational assistance needs to be tailored or adapted to a person's special vocational needs, to the special populations many institutions serve, and to build upon whatever competencies or assets a person may possess.

Vocational Theory

Several key ideas about the selection and maintenance of a career are helpful for understanding careers, organizing vocational data, and for creating effective interventions. I would like to summarize these ideas, some evidence for their support, and their practical implications.

Careers and choices. The first choice of a job and the choice of all sub-

sequent jobs constitutes a career. It is helpful to think of one's career as a search for a compatible environment in which to live. Whether a person is selecting his (her) first occupation, a field of training, a new job, or retiring, he (she) is searching for a situation where his (her) physical capabilities, talents, interests, values, personality traits can find both expression and reward. Further, people search for situations which will allow them to define themselves in old ways, or to redefine themselves along some new conception of themselves. The structure of this lifelong search is suggested in Figure 1, which illustrates how vocational aspirations expand in kind in adolescence and then become more focused with age as a person becomes clearer about his assets and liabilities and as he becomes more competent in his assessment of potential jobs and employers.

Figure 1

Figure 1 also illustrates the norm for most people. They profit from experience and become proficient in managing their careers with little or no vocational services.

Figure 2 illustrates a typical career for persons who are confused about their identity, who suffer from a variety of deficiencies and problems including lack of occupational information, inappropriate training, various psychological or physical disabilities, etc. This proportion of the population

Figure 2

is assumed to be less than 30 percent.

Figure 3 parodies the goals implicit in many occupational or career development programs. They assume that an ideal career proceeds in the following way: as a child (K-6), a person learns about occupations, selects some occu-

pational clusters to study (7-8), selects a specific occupation to follow (9-12), gets the training, enters his chosen occupation, remains in it the rest of his life, never makes an occupational mistake (takes wrong job, has doubts about current occupation, insults a supervisor, etc.).

Figure 3

This ideal is only attained by a few dull, singularly unadventurous persons. More important, a strong case can be made for the values inherent in a wider range of occupational experience, a reasonable number of constructive mistakes, and the stimulation and growth that comes from such a life. Put another way, our vocational life, like the remainder of our life, is in large part a search for self-expression and stimulation. Listening carefully to school teachers and counselors from K to 12, and then working in a single occupation in a calculated circumspect way is a bleak ideal. A more desirable ideal lies midway between this rational and inhumane ideal and the chaotic and destructive occupational patterns of a minority of the population.

Development and Classification. Our understanding of careers has been increased by two main strategies for explaining careers. One strategy has been to study the processes involved in making vocational decisions, especially the antecedents (planning, occupational information, work attitudes) that lead to good or bad decisions. This strategy of how a person's personal development leads to related vocational behavior has strong general support. In principle, all human behavior is in part a function of earlier behavior. Consequently, it is eminently rational to prepare young people to make wise career decisions, to train people in decision-making, and to teach adults some of the same ideas.

Unfortunately, this developmental and process strategy provides only vague

or diffuse guidance. The practitioner or teacher needs to know what interventions introduced when will have what effects. Instead, he is told to intervene in general. Still, the developmental strategy cannot be dismissed in its entirety. That preparation helps is supported by some data and theory (Super et al, 1967). With more work, it should be possible to separate out the most valuable or effective interventions, specify the best timing for such interventions, and abandon the anything-goes-as-long-as-it-is-developmental-and-plausible approach now in ascendance.

A second strategy has been to organize or structure occupational and career data by means of occupational classification schemes (Roe, 1956; Holland, 1966). This strategy grew out of Parson's (1906) old guidance formula: analyze the person, analyze the job, match persons and jobs according to a person's capabilities and a job's demands. This matching formula in its old and new dress or suit has enjoyed a long histoty of empirical success. Clasoifications have been useful in demonstrating that most careers have a stable or orderly quality among college students and nationally representative samples of both young and old adults (Roe et al, 1966; Holland & Whitney, 1968; Holland, et al, 1973; Nafziger et al, 1972).

The organizational strategy has also produced most of our most useful guidance devices (the Strong Vocational Interest Blank, The Kuder Preference Record), and stimulated the development of numerous vocational aptitude tests and occupational classification schemes. The recent development of a simulation device to substitute for the typical vocational counseling experience is another illustration of the practical values inherent in the organizational strategy. The Self-Directed Search (1970) simulates the vocational counseling process with a pair of booklets. The assessment booklet provides a structured self-assessment; the classification booklet, executed in the same terms, allows a person to see what occupational groups require what kinds of people.

Without a well-worked out typology, the SDS would not have been possible.

Occupational classifications can also be used to organize occupational information in more manageable and coherent ways (Roe et al, 1966; Holland, 1973). The general collapse of computerized guidance was in part due to a failure to make use of the best organizational strategies. (Machines do not organize data without intellectual help!)

To summarize, both the organizational and developmental strategies and models are required to cope with the understanding of careers. In a sentence, one does a better job of organizing information about occupations, and the other outlines how people get there.

Interventions. The contribution of vocational theory and research to a system of effective remedies and to the stimulation of more adaptive vocational behavior seems twofold: (1) Provide whatever career materials or experiences are deemed useful before decision times (selection of training, selection of entry jobs, etc.) (2) Organize or structure all available occupational and personal data into any single occupational classification scheme so that information, curricular materials, work experiences, assessment devices, and whole career programs become more coherent, comprehensible, communicable, effective, and researchable.

These general directions have been incorporated in the Practical Plans which I will outline later. Because the organizational theory used provides more explicit guidance than any developmental strategy, these plans are oriented more to the former theory. When developmental strategies become explicit theories, they will provide clearer direction for the timing and character of

the needed interventions.

To be most effective, interventions should also be tailored to the vocational needs of individuals. I have elaborated a theory-based diagnostic plan for the provision of vocational assistance elsewhere (Holland, 1973). Briefly, the diagnostic scheme was developed to identify what vocational services are needed by persons exhibiting specific vocational problems. This plan and those proposed by others (Crites, 1969) point to some ways to reduce costs by tailored rather than shotgun services or curricula in which both individuals and whole populations are sometimes treated as if they had identical vocational needs.

Some Practical Plans

Now I will summarize a plan for providing vocational experience, training, and service for high school students which capitalizes upon current knowledge and theory. I have prepared related plans for children, college students, and employed persons.

These plans differ from similar proposals in three respects: (1) they rely upon a single theory and the practical products that come from the theory (an occupational classification scheme, a self-administered vocational guidance experience device, a self-directed career program, and a diagnostic system). (2) the theory and its associated materials have undergone more than 100 empirical tests. (3) the specific details in each plan flow explicitly from the theory and its constructs.

The goal of this plan is to foster adaptive vocational behavior in high school students. Adaptive behaviors include: making satisfying vocational choices or groups of choices; exploring vocational alternatives; acquiring any experiences that will serve to clarify the relationship between a person's

interests, abilities and self-conception and one or more kinds of work; and planning for post-high school alternatives.

The key assumptions for the development of this system of experiences and services are summarized in the following statements.

1. It is more beneficial and cheaper to have all vocational materials, services, and developmental experiences organized according to a single theory, classification, and administrative unit.

2. The key to vocational decisions lies in a person's translation potentials: (a) the ability to translate personal characteristics into vocational alternatives. For example, if I have mechanical ability, dislike school work, and enjoy solving mechanical problems, I might like being a plumber, auto mechanic, etc. And (b) the courage and competency to act upon these perceptions in the face of some ambiguity and risk.

3. Translation potential can be accelerated by administering tests and inventories (especially interest inventories or vocational simulations) and by the provision of vocational and avocational experience.

4. The provision or encouragement of vocational and avocational experience so that people can learn to define themselves in vocational terms, acquire self-confidence, and involve themselves, is probably more influential and cheaper than attempts to reach the same goals by one-to-one vocational counseling or other means.

5. Occupational and personal information are most useful when they are stated in terms of translation potential—the personal significance of occupational information, or the occupational significance of personal data. Consequently, simply teaching people about occupations or about themselves is an inefficient method for the development of translation potential.

6. Work histories, especially job changes, represent a succession of translation problems. Work histories become more orderly or lawful with increasing age. From year to year, most people become more skillful and insightful about finding jobs that are congruent with their needs and talents. In short, we are always growing up, and work or work-related experience seems more helpful than reading, talking, or listening.

Student Competencies. The assumptions suggest that high school students should possess or develop the following abilities, skills, competencies, and knowledge before they graduate from high school. These tasks are listed in approximate order of importance.

1. Translation Ability. Student can list 5 to 10 occupations that are appropriate for a person with his interests and talents.

2. Student possesses sufficient self-confidence and competency to move from high school to first job or next step in training.

3. Planning Ability. Student can outline a plan for getting either the necessary training or work experience to secure each of his five possibilities. If he does not have the needed information, he knows some of the common resources for getting it, or has sufficient initiative or competence to find out.

4. Student possesses an elementary knowledge of career principles and resources, whatever they are.

A first step in the creation of vocational services is to conduct an assessment of student potentials and needs and an assessment of the student environment (school, home, and local geographical area) with respect to its vocational assets and deficits. These assessments can then be used to design a program of student services and to revise or enrich the school environment to meet the special needs and talents of the majority of students.

Student Assessment. Because students exhibit great individual differences in their translation potentials (decision-making abilities) as well as many other skills and knowledge that foster good decisions, it is helpful to characterize the main strengths and weaknesses of the student population for a particular high school. Put another way, it is inefficient to assume that each student needs each vocational treatment or experience.

The student assessment could be performed in many ways ranging from Hollywood productions (for example, see the ACD, 1973), to a simple analysis of student records, or by simply polling faculty for the SES level of its students and their most common vocational problems. Another more expensive technique would be to offer the SVIB, Kuder or SDS to students and kill two birds with one assessment; that is, provide some vocational help and obtain a rough estimate of student translation potentials at the same time.

Environmental Assessment. This kind of assessment would be more difficult. It would entail such questions as what kinds of avocational and vocational experience are largely absent for this population of students, what positive vocational experiences are readily supplied by the typical home, school, and residential area of these students. Such an assessment should help developers outline the main virtues and deficits of the environment. Again, a specific, theoretically compatible technique would be to assess the school, home, and neighborhood using The Environmental Assessment Technique (EAT). The EAT (Holland, 1973) would yield an incomplete but useful approximation of the influences in an adolescent's life.

Environmental Redesign. The student and environmental assessments could be used to plan and redesign the school and extra-curricular environments so that more adaptive future vocational behavior would occur. Needed and missing

experience could be made a natural feature of the environment rather than always bringing in a new service, a new test battery, a new library, a new computer system, etc.

Basic Ingredients. Now I would like to put these ideas about vocational service into more concrete form. A coordinated, theoretically compatible group of vocational programs, services, and experiences for a high school might include the following basic ingredients:

1. A Placement and Work Experience Service to help anyone who wanted to go to work, sample a particular kind of work, or simply explore many kinds of work. This would be the largest and most expensive service, because it would be available to any student.

2. A Translation Service. This service would make available at any grade level, at any time, and in several places, a variety of translation devices so that students could get exploratory, self-directed help without appointments. A translation consultant would also maintain a library of training and occupational information materials coded in a single occupational classification so that students could find materials without a hovering, involved librarian or counselor. The classification would be the same classification that the placement and work experience service would use.

3. An Environmental Design Service. This service staffed by a single person would perform, in cooperation with all other services, the original personal and environmental assessments used to establish the initial set of services. The next tasks would be to monitor, evaluate, and create services more closely related to student needs and more efficient services.

4. Trouble-Shooters. These would be one or two counselors who were unable to adapt to the new way of doing things. They would believe in eclecti-

cism, personal counseling as the only way, process rather than prediction, etc. Their job would be to see students (without appointments) who would be self- or other- referred because of their inability to use the standard services. Trouble shooters might make medical referrals, help students in genuine emotional conflict, organize limited group counseling, but above all they would attempt to return students to the main services as soon as possible. Salary increases would be contingent upon a zero waiting list.

5. Staff Relationships. The services would be coordinated by the director of The Environmental Design Service. This seems vital since change usually requires administrative and financial power. All other services would have equal status, but all would have to pledge allegiance to the same theory and coordinators—at least during the day.

Adapting the High School Plan

The high school plan can be modified for children, college students, and adults. The extension of the ideas in the high school plan to younger and older ages is, for the most part, obvious. Differences are largely one of degree. Figure 4 shows how the advocated activities and treatments are emphasized at different ages. Specific plans would have to be spelled out in terms of local resources.

Figure 4

As figure 4 indicates, children require experience to explore and develop the full range of their academic and nonacademic talents, and to acquire personal competency and self-confidence. These goals take precedence over translation materials, because such materials depend on a clear knowledge of a person's talents and occupational knowledge.

Adolescents require the same help as children but can make much better use of translation devices. Adults, especially older adults (30+), need translation devices most of all, since they usually have well-defined interests and talents. Consequently, more experience is not as helpful as information about immediate vocational alternatives where they can express well-developed interests and talents. Needless to say, these are only general prescriptions; some children can make good use of translation materials, and some adults need more work experience.

Beginning Strategies

There is no simple and easy way to get started with the high school plan or its modifications. Generally, most people would resist these changes. Rather than persuading people about the necessity for changes, several strategies appear promising:

1. Find a new school before it is staffed.

2. Find an old school where the principal is fed up with the current staff.

3. Find a school whose counseling staff is relatively young and attempt to persuade them.

Whatever strategy results in some adoption of the present plan, it must be revised to accomodate the local budget, staff talents, student population. In addition, it would be necessary to retrain the staff and reorient students, teachers, parents, and employers. Also, periodic evaluations are required to prevent this scheme from undergoing the same ineffectual ossification that has occurred in many programs of vocational service. The following general principles and strategies are suggested to facilitate the initiation and daily oper-

ation of vocational counseling programs. These ideas grew out of the author's experience, not his research. They are offered as an antidote for many of the current fashions and trends.

1. Create the smallest, independent guidance program possible. The larger the program, the greater its vulnerability to breakdown, criticism, inefficiency, etc.

2. Integrate into a single program only what is needed.

3. Distribute resources (staff, money, materials) according to their cost/benefit potential rather than according to what professionals like to do. For example, if printed materials are more helpful than counselors, invest heavily in printed materials.

4. Avoid foreign entanglements. Don't coordinate with agencies, organizations, and persons who fail to contribute to your program. The observance of such amenities is a major source of talent loss and program debilitation.

5. Engage in regular monitoring and small scale pragmatic evaluation so that your program can become more helpful and efficient.

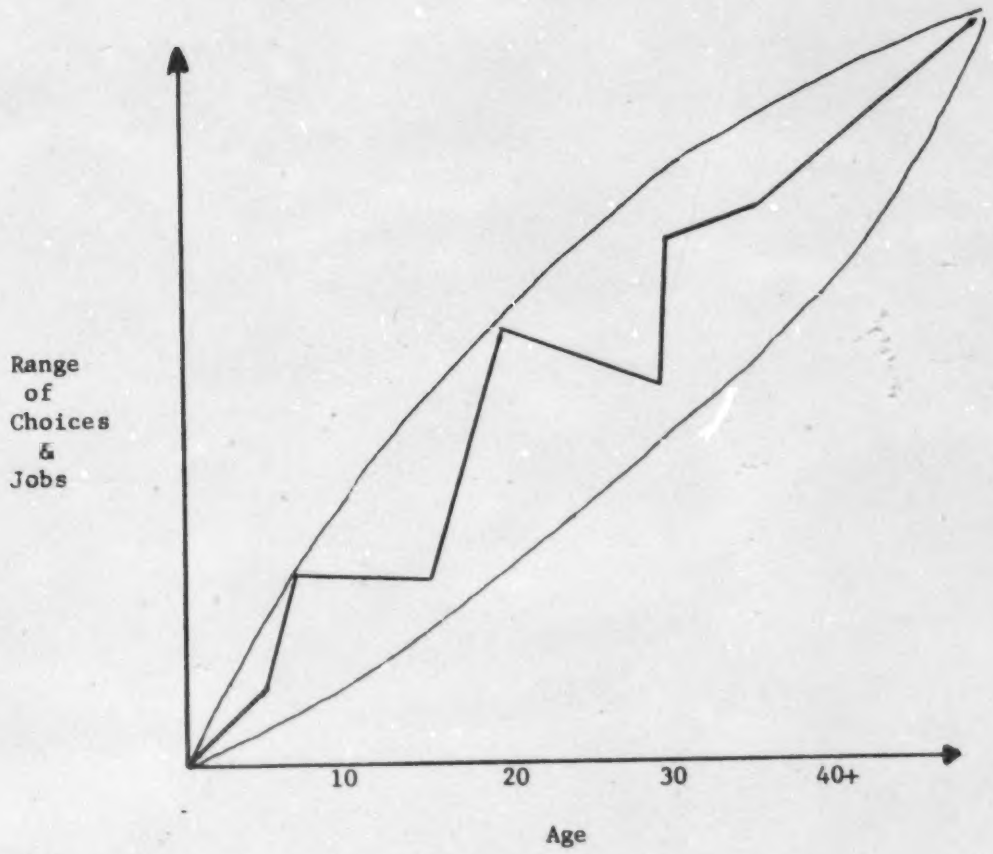

Fig. 1. - An Illustration of a Typical Work History

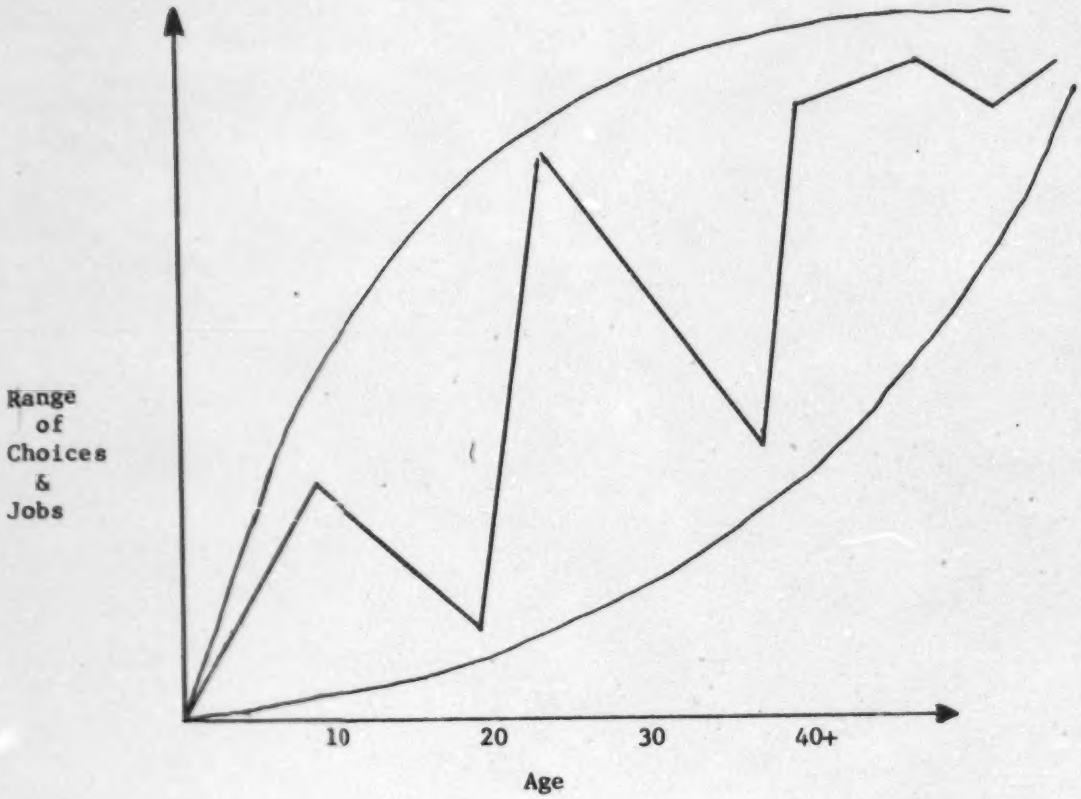

Fig. 2. - An Illustration of an Atypical Work History

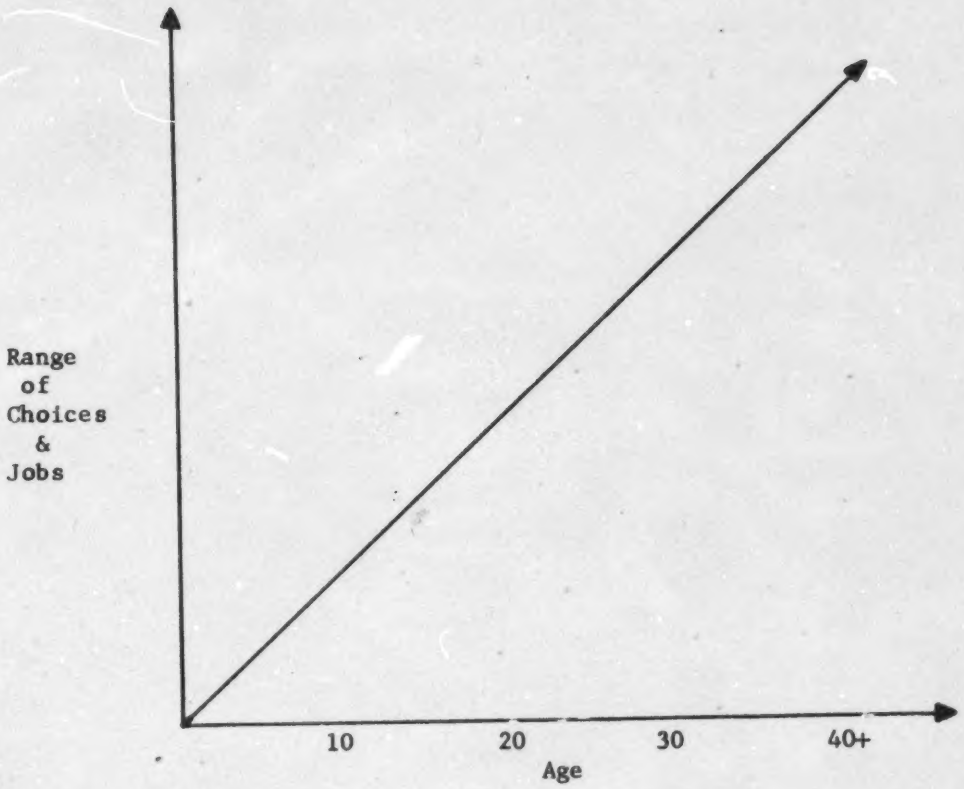

Fig. 3. - A Work History Implied in Some Career Education Programs--A Parody

Figure 4

The Relative Importance of Work Experience, Translation Materials, Talent Exploration, and Competency Development at Different Age Levels

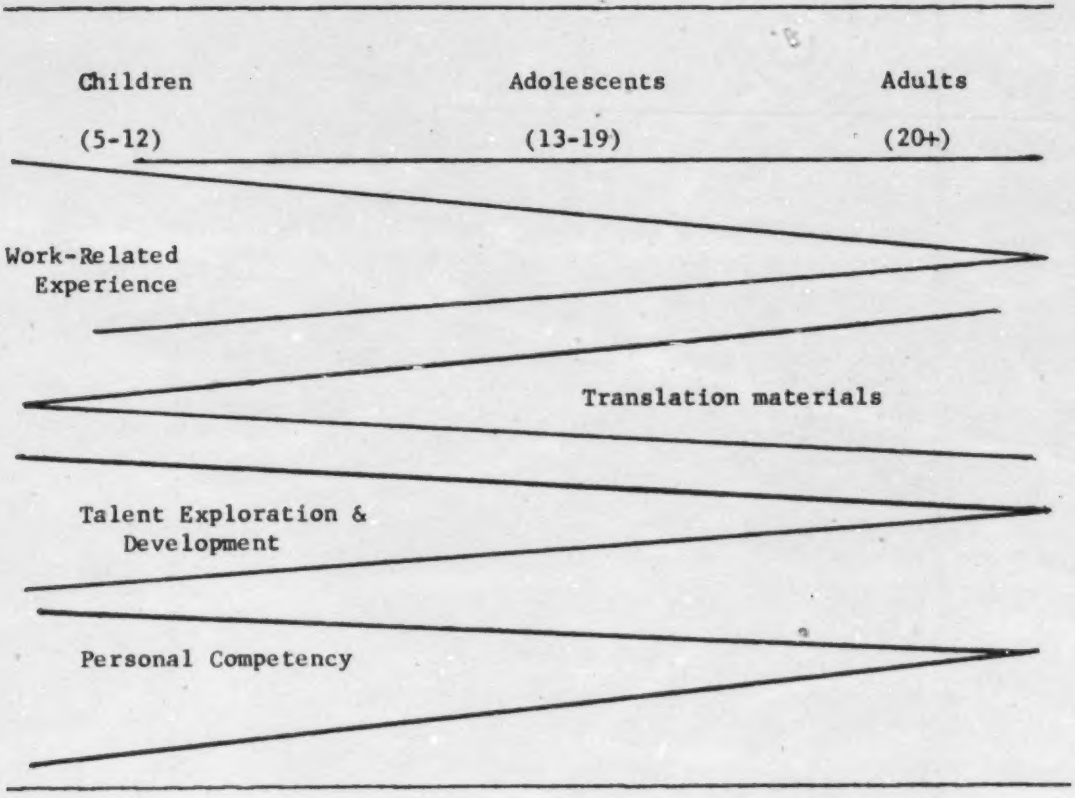

Fig. 4. - The Relative Importance of Work Experience, Translation Materials, Talent Exploration, and Competency Development at Different Age Levels

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